

II. Listing of Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1-23. (Cancelled)

24. (Currently Amended) A vertebral replacement implant for interposition in a space left by one or more removed vertebrae between adjacent intact vertebrae, comprising:

a tubular body having opposite ends and sized to span at least a portion of the space between the intact vertebrae;

a pair of endplate assemblies attached to each of the opposite ends of the body, each of the endplate assemblies having an end surface and a tubular portion defining a bore therethrough extending through the end surface; and

a basket comprising a tubular wall bounded by a base, the wall and base defining a cavity, wherein the basket is adapted to be disposed within at least one of the bores.

25. (Currently Amended) The vertebral replacement implant according to claim 24 wherein the basket cavity is suitable for receiving graft material.

26. (Original) The vertebral replacement implant according to claim 24 wherein the basket extends into the tubular body.

27. (Original) The vertebral replacement implant according to claim 24
wherein the basket includes at least one positioning tab; and
wherein the end surface includes at least one positioning recess configured to engage the at least one positioning tab.

28. (Previously Presented) The vertebral replacement implant according to claim 24
wherein the tubular portion has first threads defined thereon; and
wherein the basket has second threads thereon configured to threadedly engage the first threads on the cylindrical portion.

29. (Original) The vertebral replacement implant according to claim 24
wherein the basket includes one or more apertures.

30. (Original) The vertebral replacement implant according to claim 29 wherein the apertures extend over more than 50% of the basket.

31. (Original) The vertebral replacement implant according to claim 24, wherein the tubular body includes a wall defining a hollow interior, the wall further defining a plurality of openings therethrough, the openings being in communication with the hollow interior.

32. (Original) The vertebral replacement implant according to claim 31, wherein the openings are sized to allow a graft material entry into the hollow interior.

33. (Original) The vertebral replacement implant according to claim 31, wherein after the interposition in the space left by one or more vertebrae, at least one of the openings is accessible.

34. (Original) The vertebral replacement implant according to claim 31,
wherein the basket includes one or more apertures; and
wherein the openings are sized to provide a line of sight through the openings, through the hollow interior, through the one or more apertures, and into the cavity of the basket.

35 - 39. (Cancelled)

40. (Currently Amended) A graft containment device for use with a vertebral implant having an internal cavity, the graft containment device comprising:

a sidewall circumscribing a base;

an open end opposite the base; and

an engagement device for maintaining the graft containment device within the cavity of the vertebral implant.

41. (Original) The graft containment device of claim 40 wherein the engagement device suspends the graft containment device within the cavity of the vertebral implant.

42. (Original) The graft containment device of claim 40 wherein the engagement device comprises at least one tab.

43. (Original) The graft containment device of claim 40 wherein the engagement device comprises a flange integrated with the sidewall.
44. (Original) The graft containment device of claim 40 wherein engagement device comprises external threads.
45. (Cancelled)
46. (Currently Amended) A tubular vertebral implant device for interposition between two vertebral endplates, the tubular vertebral implant device comprising:
a tubular assembly having a sidewall; and
a graft containment device, having comprising an open end and a perforated base plate opposite the open end, disposed in at least one end of the tubular assembly.
47. (Original) The vertebral implant device of claim 46 wherein the graft containment device is removable.
48. (Original) The vertebral implant device of claim 46 wherein the tubular assembly is expandable.
49. (Original) The vertebral implant device of claim 46 further comprising windows through the sidewall to permit the placement of graft material into the tubular assembly.
50. (Original) The vertebral implant device of claim 46 wherein the graft containment device opens toward the adjacent vertebral endplate.
51. (Original) The vertebral implant device of claim 46 wherein the graft containment device extends less than half the length of the side wall.
52. (Original) The vertebral implant device of claim 46 wherein the sidewall comprises a plurality of apertures extending over more than half of the sidewall.
53. (Original) The vertebral implant device of claim 46 wherein the graft containment device comprises a resorbable material.

54. (Cancelled)

55. (Original) The method of claim ~~54~~ 64 further comprising filling at least a portion of the vertebral implant with bone growth promoting material.

56-61. (Cancelled)

62. (New) The vertebral replacement implant according to claim 24 wherein the base of the basket comprises apertures.

63. (New) The vertebral replacement implant according to claim 24 wherein the tubular wall is tapered.

64. (New) A method of installing a vertebral implant into a vertebral column between a pair of vertebral bodies, the method comprising:

selecting a material receptacle, the receptacle comprising a sidewall and a base portion which define a cavity;

inserting bone growth promoting material into the cavity and against the base portion;

inserting the material receptacle into the vertebral implant; and

installing the vertebral implant between the pair of vertebral bodies.

65. (New) A vertebral implant adapted to extend between a pair of vertebral endplates, the vertebral implant comprising:

a first tubular implant member;

a first endplate member connected to the first tubular implant member, the first endplate member comprising a through bore; and

a tubular receptacle member sized to extend into the through bore, the tubular receptacle member bounded at one end by a perforated base to form a cavity adapted to receive graft material.

66. (New) The vertebral implant of claim 65 further comprising:

a second tubular implant member and

a connector engaged between the first and second tubular members.

67. (New) The vertebral implant of claim 65 wherein the tubular receptacle member is threadedly engaged with the first endplate member.